

COUNTY COUNCIL MEETING
Feb. 6, 2007
6:00 P. M.

The regular meeting of the Edgefield County Council was held at 6:00 P. M. Tuesday, February 6, 2007, in the County Council Chambers, 225 Jeter Street, Edgefield, SC.

Members present

C. Monroe Kneece, Chairman
Willie C. Bright, Vice Chairman
Norman Dorn, Councilman
Joel D. Hudson, Councilman
B. Everette Kitchens, Councilman

Others present:

John W. Pettigrew, Jr., County Administrator
John F. Byrd, Jr., County Attorney
Lynn Strom, Finance/Budget Manager
Barbara R. Stark, Clerk to Council

The meeting was called to order by Chairman Kneece and the invocation was given by Councilman Hudson. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

Ernie Church with Clemson Extension introduced Steven Pohlman, Jr., a new employee with Clemson Extension Service. His position is divided between two areas: adult forestry and youth education program. This position is funded partially through the county from forestry monies the county receives.

Minutes

Motion was made by Councilman Bright, seconded by Councilman Kitchens, to approve the January 2, 2007, Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Edgefield County Council. Motion carried unanimously.

Reports

There were no comments concerning the reports.

Ordinances

The first reading of Ordinance 06-07-588, "An Ordinance Enacting and Adopting a Supplement to the Code of Ordinances for Edgefield County, SC", passed unanimously with a motion made by Councilman Hudson, seconded by Councilman Bright.

Prior to the **first reading** of Ordinance No. 06-07-589 concerning the fire contract, the administrator was asked to explain the reasoning for a revision of the contract. "This is a new contract updating the previous contract that council originally approved along with

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the seven (7) volunteer fire departments in 2001. The contract expired in June of 2006 and automatically renewed. During that time there were negotiations with the various departments concerning primarily the distribution of the funds. The highlights of the changes are that the minimum guaranteed funding to all of the departments will go from what is currently \$25,000 minimum to \$45,000. This would boost the funding for Johnston, Trenton, Northside and Westside. Those four (4) currently fall under \$45,000. This would help those departments with their funding. In order to accomplish that additional funding there would be no additional millage put on the taxes, it will stay at the ten (10) mills. The county would reduce the administrative charges from 10% to a flat \$15,000 per year and the Merriwether Fire Department would forego revenue from the vehicle taxes and it would be used to help those departments get to the \$45,000 minimum. Under the current contract, all of the fire departments have to agree for any changes to be made. All of the fire departments have agreed to the changes and now it is before council for their decision on the changes.”

Motion was made by Councilman Kitchens, seconded by Councilman Dorn, to approve first reading of Ordinance No. 06-07-589, “An Ordinance Adopting a Revised Fire Services Contract for Fire Departments in Edgefield County to Provide for Mutual Aid, Distribution of Funding and Other Matters Related Thereto.” Motion carried unanimously.

Motion was made by Councilman Kitchens, seconded by Councilman Hudson to accept Ordinance No. 06-07-586 as amended. Motion carried unanimously.

Councilman Hudson made the motion to approve second reading of Ordinance No. 06-07-586, “An Ordinance Amending Ordinance No. 86-248, General Requirements for Road Acceptance. The motion was seconded by Councilman Bright and carried unanimously.

Councilman Hudson made the motion to approve second reading of Ordinance No. 06-07-587, “An Ordinance Authorizing the Issuance and Sale of a General Obligation Refunding Bond, Series 2007, or Such Other Appropriate Series Designation, of Edgefield County, South Carolina, in the Principal Amount of Not Exceeding \$390,000; Fixing the Form and Details of the Bond; Authorizing the County Administrator or His Lawfully Authorized Designee to Determine Certain Matters Relating to the Bond; Providing for the Payment of the Bond and the Disposition of the Proceeds Thereof; and Other Matters Relating Thereto.” The motion was seconded by Councilman Kitchens, and the motion carried unanimously.

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New Business

2007-08 Proposed Budget Calendar

Councilman Hudson made the motion, seconded by Councilman Kitchens, to approve the FY 2007-08 Proposed Budget Calendar with one change: meetings with department heads and elected officials to be held on Thursday and Friday (Feb. 22nd and 23rd) instead of Wednesday and Thursday (Feb. 21st and 22nd) due to a meeting in Columbia the administrator and councilmen will be attending on the 21st. Motion carried unanimously.

Board Appointments

Library Board

The Library Board asked council to fill the vacancy on the library board created by the resignation of Mrs. Margaret Ann Thompson. Her term expires in 2008. A motion was made by Councilman Kitchens, seconded by Councilman Hudson, to appoint Mrs. Alleen Miller to fill the unexpired term (2008) of Mrs. Margaret Ann Thompson on the Edgefield County Library Board. Motion carried unanimously.

Hospital Board

The terms of Tom Nidiffer and Tim Williams ended Jan. 9, 2007, having served the unexpired terms of two previous members. The hospital board requested council to appoint them to serve a full term (Jan. 9, 2007 ending Jan. 9, 2010). Motion was made by Councilman Kitchens, seconded by Councilman Hudson, to appoint Tom Nidiffer and Tim Williams each to serve a full term on the hospital board (Jan 9, 2007 ending Jan. 9, 2010). Motion carried unanimously.

The hospital board requested the reappointment of the following hospital board members to a three year term beginning Jan. 9, 2007, and ending Jan. 9, 2010.

Dr. B. E. Nicholson

Kenneth Collier

Alva Lewis

Christopher Yonce

Councilman Dorn made the motion to reappoint Dr. B. E. Nicholson, Kenneth Collier, Alva Lewis, and Christopher Yonce to a three year term on the hospital board (Jan. 9, 2007 ending Jan. 9, 2010). The motion was seconded by Councilman Hudson and the motion carried unanimously.

Speed Limits

Howard Gibson addressed council concerning speed limits on county roads. As Mr. Gibson explained he has been before council on numerous occasions concerning speed limits at the request of residents on certain roads. He asked council to standardize speed limits on county maintained roads only, as follows:

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Subdivisions, dirt roads, paved roads with dead ends:	25 mph
Paved through roads	35 mph

By setting the speed limits, the road department can post the signs as time allows, and the sheriff's office can enforce the speed limits as the complaints are received. Councilman Hudson made the motion, seconded by Councilman Bright to accept the proposed speed limits for various county maintained roads. Motion carried unanimously.

Countywide recreation program

Councilman Kitchens brought before Council a request from the Recreation Commission. The recreation program is in its fourth year, and in the beginning a board was appointed consisting of two individuals from the Town of Johnston, the Town of Edgefield and two appointed by the Edgefield County Council. On many, many occasions at scheduled meetings there was not a quorum present (maybe three members in attendance), so business could not be conducted. Mr. Kitchens stated that it was suggested to consider appointing a committee to take a closer look at the function of the Recreation Commission and come up with a better way of appointing people that would show more of an interest in the serving on the Commission.

Councilman Dorn was appointed by the Council to serve on the Recreation. Mr. Dorn suggested another night to have the meetings because he, for one, has another obligation on that night at the school and has not been able to attend.

Councilman Kitchens suggested selecting a committee to take a closer look at this and come up with some alternate proposals. Mr. Kitchens would like for the committee to include the administrator since he is actually responsible for the recreation program – to take a close look at it.

The towns have appointed citizens to serve on the Commission and the County Council appointed two county council members to be part of the Commission. The way the ordinance is structured either can be appointed. As far as the town appointees – we can ask them to appoint individuals who will attend the meetings – but we cannot control who they appoint – not by the present ordinance. The ordinance also states that “any member of the Commission missing half of the Commission's meetings in any fiscal year, inclusive of called meetings, shall be notified by the Chair that he or she is considered as having resigned.” It was stated that this should be enforced.

Motion was made by Councilman Kitchens to appoint the administrator, Councilman Bright and himself to serve on a committee to review the ordinance on the countywide recreation program. Motion was seconded by Councilman Hudson and the motion carried unanimously.

No old business.

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Other business

Chairman Kneece brought before Council an item received prior to the meeting that was not on the agenda, that being a resolution from the Burton Center Multi-County Board for Disabilities and Special Needs. The Burton Center is an entity in Edgefield County and provides transportation to the elderly and/or persons with disabilities. The Center is applying for a FTA grant to the SC Department of Mass Transit for assistance in purchasing a fifteen (15) passenger bus and the County Council was asked to approve a resolution supporting this request. The motion to approve this request was made by Councilman Bright, seconded by Councilman Kitchens. Motion passed unanimously.

Administrator's Report

The administrator stated he had met with the federal prison warden concerning more inmates to help out at Bettis Park. We had only one inmate but today another one came in and hopefully another one will be coming in within the next few days. The warden is trying to get more inmates but each has to be screened to make sure they pose no danger to anybody and ones that will be willing to work. There are two fields to be completed at Bettis, hopefully by spring and it would certainly be helpful to have more inmates.

Also in the Bettis Academy area we have met with Ms. Willa Lanham regarding the Biddle Hall Annex (science building). In the state budget for this year there is a \$300,000 grant actually awarded to the County of Edgefield designated for Biddle Hall. We will be administering that grant. Howard Gibson has met with Ms. Lanham several times on this project.

We are continuing to hear the appeals on the tax assessment. There are about four hundred (400) to hear and the ones that have been appealed further to the Board of Appeals will be heard beginning the first of March – something over twenty (20) of those.

The Association of Counties will be sponsoring a Legislative Day (Feb. 13th). Each year they group five or six counties together to come to Columbia to bring counties up to date on legislation that would affect counties. Edgefield County's day is February 13th. Mr. Pettigrew stated that he would be attending.

The following week is the Association of Counties' Mid Year Conference in Columbia, and also that week the Department of Commerce is sponsoring an Economic Development Workshop. Mr. Pettigrew stated that he will be attending the Workshop. There are a number of items of on-going projects regarding economic development in the county and it is very good to make additional contacts with the Department of Commerce because you never know when you may need that help.

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Councilman Dorn asked to address council concerning the recreation park at Liberty Spring. Mr. Dorn stated that it was his understanding there was \$4,000 plus, to immediately get started. The administrator informed Mr. Dorn there is a little more than that and bids are being obtained on a back stop. As soon as three bids are received one bid will be accepted and we will get started and we are still on track to have it ready for this spring (the baseball field).

No guests.

Comments from public.

The Clerk of Court, Mrs. Shirley Newby, asked Council its consideration for funding concerning a request she has received from the archives.

Mrs. Newby said she has been asked about retrieving 14,851 judgment rolls (1933 thru 1996) from the archives vault. The newer recorded files, 1997 through the present, are already in the Clerk's office. These records include civil judgments and larger plats that are used daily and have to be retrieved from the archives vault. She now has the space to store these judgments in her office with the tab rolling system that has been put in. There would be approximately sixty (60) years of growth left for future judgments. She asked council for \$7,677.61 (includes shipping & handling) to purchase pre-printed folders with labels attached. She and her staff will remove the records from the present storage envelopes to the folders.

This is a public office and the public is best served by having all records in one area. Better accessibility is the key – better to serve the citizens.

Motion was made by Chairman Kneece, seconded by Councilman Bright, to approve the \$7,677.61 to be taken from 100-279 (council's contingency). Motion carried unanimously.

Glenn Whitlock

Mr. Whitlock stated that he lives at 53 Whitlock Road, Trenton, SC. He was concerned that he could not get an answer from the assessor's office about his assessment on several tracts of land. This has been since the latter part of November 2006. The administrator will meet with Mr. Whitlock concerning this issue.

Claims approved as follows:

PAYROLL:	1/1/07 thru 1/11/07
Regular.....	\$216,336.36

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PAYROLL:

1/15/07 thru 1/28/07

Regular.....\$212,947.72

General Operating.....\$947,943.51

Executive Session

Chairman Kneece asked for a motion to convene in executive session pursuant to Code Section 30-4-70 (a) (5) of the SC Code of Laws, as amended, concerning a proposed industry, and returning to regular session at the discretion of the Chairman. Councilman Dorn made the motion to go in executive session, seconded by Councilman Hudson. The motion carried unanimously.

Returning to regular session, Chairman Kneece stated council discussed and received information on an ongoing project.

There being no further business, Councilman Dorn made the motion to adjourn, seconded by Councilman Hudson. Motion carried unanimously. The next regular scheduled meeting will be held at 6:00 P.M. Tuesday, March 16, 2007, in the County Council Chambers, 225 Jeter Street, Edgefield.

C. Monroe Kneece, Chairman

Willie C. Bright, Vice Chairman

Norman Dorn, Councilman

Joel D. Hudson, Councilman

B. Everette Kitchens, Council

ATTEST

Barbara R. Stark, Clerk to Council